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The situation in Afghanistan

General and complete disarmament

Letter dated 6 April 2009 from the Permanent Representatives of the Russian Federation and the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to submit the attached two joint statement by Dmitry Medvedev, President of the Russian Federation, and Barack Obama, President of the United States of America (see annexes I and II), which were adopted at the meeting of the two Presidents in London on 1 April 2009.

We would appreciate it if you could have the present letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 17 and 89, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Vitaly **Churkin**
Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Susan **Rice**
Permanent Representative of the United States of America
to the United Nations

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Annex I to the letter dated 6 April 2009 from the Permanent Representatives of the Russian Federation and the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and Russian]

Joint statement by President Dmitry Medvedev of the Russian Federation and President Barack Obama of the United States of America

1. Reaffirming that the era when our countries viewed each other as enemies is long over, and recognizing our many common interests, we today established a substantive agenda for Russia and the United States to be developed over the coming months and years. We are resolved to work together to strengthen strategic stability, international security, and jointly meet contemporary global challenges, while also addressing disagreements openly and honestly in a spirit of mutual respect and acknowledgement of each other's perspective.

2. We discussed measures to overcome the effects of the global economic crisis, strengthen the international monetary and financial system, restore economic growth, and advance regulatory efforts to ensure that such a crisis does not happen again.

3. We also discussed nuclear arms control and reduction. As leaders of the two largest nuclear weapons states, we agreed to work together to fulfill our obligations under Article VI of the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and demonstrate leadership in reducing the number of nuclear weapons in the world. We committed our two countries to achieving a nuclear free world, while recognizing that this long-term goal will require a new emphasis on arms control and conflict resolution measures, and their full implementation by all concerned nations. We agreed to pursue new and verifiable reductions in our strategic offensive arsenals in a step-by-step process, beginning by replacing the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with a new, legally-binding treaty. We are instructing our negotiators to start talks immediately on this new treaty and to report on results achieved in working out the new agreement by July.

4. While acknowledging that differences remain over the purposes of deployment of missile defense assets in Europe, we discussed new possibilities for mutual international cooperation in the field of missile defense, taking into account joint assessments of missile challenges and threats, aimed at enhancing the security of our countries, and that of our allies and partners.

5. The relationship between offensive and defensive arms will be discussed by the two governments.

6. We intend to carry out joint efforts to strengthen the international regime for nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. In this regard we strongly support the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and are committed to its further strengthening. Together, we seek to secure nuclear weapons and materials, while promoting the safe use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. We support the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and stress the importance of the IAEA Safeguards system. We seek universal adherence to IAEA comprehensive safeguards, as provided for in Article III of the NPT, and to the Additional Protocol and urge the ratification and implementation of these agreements. We

will deepen cooperation to combat nuclear terrorism. We will seek to further promote the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, which now unites 75 countries. We also support international negotiations for a verifiable treaty to end the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons. As a key measure of nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament, we underscored the importance of the entering into force the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. In this respect, President Obama confirmed his commitment to work for American ratification of this Treaty. We applaud the achievements made through the Nuclear Security Initiative launched in Bratislava in 2005, including to minimize the civilian use of Highly Enriched Uranium, and we seek to continue bilateral collaboration to improve and sustain nuclear security. We agreed to examine possible new initiatives to promote international cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy while strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime. We welcome the work of the IAEA on multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle and encourage efforts to develop mutually beneficial approaches with states considering nuclear energy or considering expansion of existing nuclear energy programs in conformity with their rights and obligations under the NPT. To facilitate cooperation in the safe use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, both sides will work to bring into force the bilateral Agreement for Cooperation in the Field of Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy. To strengthen non-proliferation efforts, we also declare our intent to give new impetus to implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1540 on preventing non-state actors from obtaining WMD-related materials and technologies.

7. We agreed to work on a bilateral basis and at international forums to resolve regional conflicts.

8. We agreed that al-Qaida and other terrorist and insurgent groups operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan pose a common threat to many nations, including the United States and Russia. We agreed to work toward and support a coordinated international response with the UN playing a key role. We also agreed that a similar coordinated and international approach should be applied to counter the flow of narcotics from Afghanistan, as well as illegal supplies of precursors to this country. Both sides agreed to work out new ways of cooperation to facilitate international efforts of stabilization, reconstruction and development in Afghanistan, including in the regional context.

9. We support the continuation of the Six-Party Talks at an early date and agreed to continue to pursue the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in accordance with purposes and principles of the September 19, 2005 Joint Statement and subsequent consensus documents. We also expressed concern that a North Korean ballistic missile launch would be damaging to peace and stability in the region and agreed to urge the DPRK to exercise restraint and observe relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

10. While we recognize that under the NPT Iran has the right to a civilian nuclear program, Iran needs to restore confidence in its exclusively peaceful nature. We underline that Iran, as any other Non-Nuclear Weapons State - Party to the NPT, has assumed the obligation under Article II of that Treaty in relation to its non-nuclear weapon status. We call on Iran to fully implement the relevant U.N. Security Council and the IAEA Board of Governors resolutions including provision of required cooperation with the IAEA. We reiterated their commitment to pursue a comprehensive diplomatic solution, including direct diplomacy and through P5 + 1 negotiations, and urged Iran to seize this opportunity to address the international community's concerns.

11. We also started a dialogue on security and stability in Europe. Although we disagree about the causes and sequence of the military actions of last August, we agreed that we must continue efforts toward a peaceful and

lasting solution to the unstable situation today. Bearing in mind that significant differences remain between us, we nonetheless stress the importance of last year's six-point accord of August 12, the September 8 agreement and other relevant agreements, and pursuing effective cooperation in the Geneva discussions to bring stability to the region.

12. We agreed that the resumption of activities of the NATO-Russia Council is a positive step. We welcomed the participation of an American delegation at the special Conference on Afghanistan convened under the auspices of Shanghai Cooperation Organization last month.

13. We discussed our interest in exploring a comprehensive dialogue on strengthening Euro-Atlantic and European security, including existing commitments and President Medvedev's June 2008 proposals on these issues. The OSCE is one of the key multilateral venues for this dialogue, as is the NATO-Russia Council.

14. We also agreed that our future meetings must include discussions of transnational threats such as terrorism, organized crime, corruption and narcotics, with the aim of enhancing our cooperation in countering these threats and strengthening international efforts in these fields, including through joint actions and initiatives.

15. We will strive to give rise to a new dynamic in our economic links including the launch of an intergovernmental commission on trade and economic cooperation and the intensification of our business dialogue. Especially during these difficult economic times, our business leaders must pursue all opportunities for generating economic activity. We both pledged to instruct our governments to make efforts to finalize as soon as possible Russia's accession into the World Trade Organization and continue working towards the creation of favorable conditions for the development of Russia-U.S. economic ties.

16. We also pledge to promote cooperation in implementing Global Energy Security Principles, adopted at the G-8 summit in Saint Petersburg in 2006, including improving energy efficiency and the development of clean energy technologies.

17. Today we have outlined a comprehensive and ambitious work plan for our two governments. We both affirmed a mutual desire to organize contacts between our two governments in a more structured and regular way. Greater institutionalized interactions between our ministries and departments make success more likely in meeting the ambitious goals that we have established today.

18. At the same time, we also discussed the desire for greater cooperation not only between our governments, but also between our societies -- more scientific cooperation, more students studying in each other's country, more cultural exchanges, and more cooperation between our nongovernmental organizations. In our relations with each other, we also seek to be guided by the rule of law, respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights, and tolerance for different views.

19. We, the leaders of Russia and the United States, are ready to move beyond Cold War mentalities and chart a fresh start in relations between our two countries. In just a few months we have worked hard to establish a new tone in our relations. Now it is time to get down to business and translate our warm words into actual achievements of benefit to Russia, the United States, and all those around the world interested in peace and prosperity.

Annex II to the letter dated 6 April 2009 from the Permanent Representatives of the Russian Federation and the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and Russian]

Joint statement by Dmitry A. Medvedev, President of the Russian Federation, and Barack Obama, President of the United States of America, regarding negotiations on further reductions in strategic offensive arms

The President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, and the President of the Russian Federation, Dmitriy A. Medvedev, noted that the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START Treaty), which expires in December 2009, has completely fulfilled its intended purpose and that the maximum levels for strategic offensive arms recorded in the Treaty were reached long ago. They have therefore decided to move further along the path of reducing and limiting strategic offensive arms in accordance with U.S. and Russian obligations under Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The Presidents decided to begin bilateral intergovernmental negotiations to work out a new, comprehensive, legally binding agreement on reducing and limiting strategic offensive arms to replace the START Treaty. The United States and the Russian Federation intend to conclude this agreement before the Treaty expires in December. In this connection, they instructed their delegations at the negotiations to proceed on basis of the following:

- The subject of the new agreement will be the reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms;

- In the future agreement the Parties will seek to record levels of reductions in strategic offensive arms that will be lower than those in the 2002 Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions, which is currently in effect;

- The new agreement will mutually enhance the security of the Parties and predictability and stability in strategic offensive forces, and will include effective verification measures drawn from the experience of the Parties in implementing the START Treaty.

They directed their negotiators to report on progress achieved in working out the new agreement by July 2009.